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THE SINGLE HOMOSEXUAL

JULY 1966

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" . . . a mystic bond
of brotherhood
makes all men one."
Carlyle

magazine

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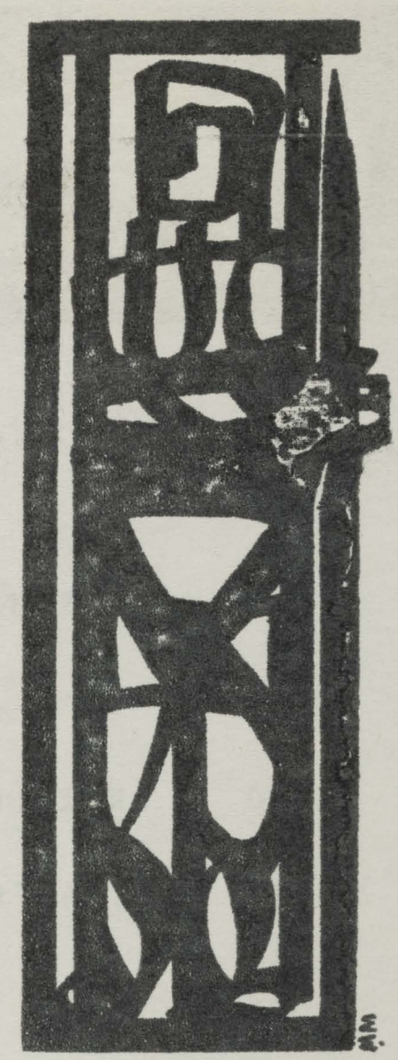
THE SINGLE HOMOSEXUAL

by Frank Golovitz



"For narrow is the gate and hard the way, and few there be that find it . . . "

(All the names in this account are purely fictional.)

The first question about the life of a single homosexual is whether his living alone is a curse or a blessing. And that depends . . .

Examples of lonely, unhappy homosexuals, such as Blair Niles' sobering portrayal of the tormented and confused Mark Thornton in her novel, *Strange Brother*, are familiar. Less so are the live-alone-and-like-it type.

Harris Medwick was a bachelor by choice. He could have married had he chosen, and could have made it good. Someone tried to blackmail him once, and the supervisor of his research plant called him in and urged he marry for appearance sake. Harris said he'd considered it, but felt it was untrue to his own nature and unfair to any prospective wife.

A high-level physicist, he survived McCarthyism and still has security clearance, despite his homosexuality and his liberally expressed political ideas. I met him in Oakland eight years ago when he talked to some science-fiction fans about "The Morals of Tomorrow." Society, he said, was approaching the stage where birth control and scientific child-care would make the family obsolete and would release all but a few from reproduction, with sterilization allowing sex freedom to most of the population.

In later conversation he quoted Francis Bacon—"He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune, for they are an impediment to great enterprises," and applied the same to so-called homosexual "marriage." Personal, animal contentedness may be a natural and ultimate

goal for most people, but anyone aiming higher must allow neither sex nor entangling alliances to hold him back. Harris personally approached sex and friendship with casual openness and warmth, but like a man who eats with relish when hungry, and then gets up and goes about his business—his scientific work.

"But it's not good for man to be alone," I protested.

"Our society," he answered, "tries to enforce heterosexual monogamy with a little Bible-quoting, forgetting that Jesus chose to be alone, and St. Paul said all Christians, except the moral weaklings, ought to be single. People are put together with varying needs and capabilities. The Roman Church says serving the Church takes the whole man. Any man who is *committed,* to science, art, politics or what, can be tied to a marrige and do justice to that *and* his profession. 'No man can serve two masters,' the committed man lives among people, but can't allow any one to enslave him. Friendship and sex, for him, are peripheral needs."

I asked if he wasn't just rationalizing and sublimating his sexual frustration. "If I'm frustrated," he replied, "I don't see the evidence. I think that's nonsense, but it doesn't matter. The world needs scientists and it needs babymakers. But I haven't time for both jobs."

Few can live by his rule—but few have his committment. I've known more homosexuals whose lives were less ideal.

Johnny Geffels was another sort. He supervised a tenement in Lower East Side New York, living alone in filthy basement quarters among stacks of papers and magazines. Geffels looked like an "auntie" though barely thirty, but was quick to express his hatred of "queers." With sordid monotony, he made a nightly search of public "cans" for the most impersonal form of sex contact. I shouldn't judge him unduly. He may have been living according to his nature and within his limits, and he was harmless. Should we look for *causes* in rejection —loss of self-respect? Did he despise himself too much for affinity with another human being? Who knows? Such explanations are to facile even though they hit the mark now and then . . .

Dirk Hutzieff's philosophy was a little like Harris Medwick's. Single by choice, he was hardly homosexual by choice—he could barely stand a women in the room—he was too much the grand bitch himself. He was a dedicated artist but with little recognition for it. Ironically, two novels and his exquisite poetry, which he held in low regard, were quite successful. He had a large San Francisco apartment during the war and threw a party whenever he finished a painting—four or five times a year. Starting as prissily formal affairs, ending as brawls, they were often followed by his brief, garishly passionate romances, with the partner modeling for the next Blake-like painting. Dirk had elaborate, mystical "love force" theories. He was convinced that love, the fuel and inspiration for his art, must never stagnate into a permanent (smothering) relationship.

"The Eros-passion," he said, "is like a match's incandescence—it naturally consumes itself. Art seeks to crystalize, for all time, an image from the flaring passion which the artist must have glimpsed and then let go of before he can conceive and create. If he tries to wallow in the passion beyond his time, he is trapped and will never create. The artist deliberately has to snuff out passion at its zenith to get the most out of it artistically. Others have this problem too. The common herd *thinks* passion can be

preserved forever—the grand illusion. If you don't snuff out a match, it burns out soon enough. But *they* engage a priest to bless the cold ashes with which they live—pretending they still tend the flame."

Gerald Albritten was a promising young State Department official. Extremely brilliant, he had an ability to "pump" people without seeming to, striking facility for languages, a good, conservative appearance, and infinitely charming social manners. I met him through New York friends shortly after McCarthy's rise. Gerald was seen too often with 42nd Street hustlers. He fought his dismissal, but in vain. He had it rough till he got an overseas job with an export firm.

"If some homos are sensitive to blackmail," he said, "it's society that forces them into secrecy. The best men in foreign service are single, and usually homosexual. Its the man who puts his family first who's really a security problem."

The Church of England not long ago urged homosexuals. who couldn't be changed, to *abstain*. Armin Thompson had done this for years, he was a "Y" counsellor in my home town, and I was referred to him for advice about my own problem. His aggressive masculinity left me unprepared for his own confession: "You're not alone. Millions of us have to find ways to face this problem. It's up to you—what kind of moral fibre you've got. You can spend your life feeling sorry for yourself, if you want. You can live in slinking degradation, shock society and alienate those who respect you. live like a crazy bohemian, if you want. But *if* you want, if you have the moral fibre, the will power, the faith in God to carry you through, you can turn this terrible urge into a beautiful and useful thing. Man's love for man is the purest emotion of which we are humanly capable, but it must not be corrupted."

I argued. Why should physical expression of this love be more corrupting than with ordinary love? But to him overt sex was the first step to ruin.

"We don't find it easy to resist our impulses. Working in the 'Y,' temptation tears at me every minute. It's not just seeing men and boys and having desire toward them, it's knowing the things that go on here . . . I chose to work here so I would always keep my guard up. If I forget these evil desires for one solitary minute, and they suddenly sneaked up behind me, I'm afraid to think what would happen."

I soon grew tired of his preaching, and convinced his approach to homosexuality was dangerously unhealthy and unnatural. I had to begin my own quest for that perfect life-partner. I found that quest was a way of life in itself, and a deflector of my other ambitions. As Dorothy Parker said:

"Accursed from their birth they be
Who seek to find monogamy,
Pursuing it from bed to bed.
I think they would be better dead."

Yes, many homosexuals are single, not by choice, but because they haven't found the "one."

Some set impossible standards. Ray Pittrucci set his so high that thirty years hunting found him no nearer his goal. But his nightly hunt goes on, and each new friend is met with pledges of eternal love, and invited to share Ray's house and bank balance. Somewhere in this frantic engagement, the newcomer is inevitably tried in the balance and found wanting, and next morning, cast forth into utter darkness.

Some don't go easily, and Ray had paid dearly for his mistakes. He is an extreme type, but not rare.

Marcia Deal has been carrying on the same process longer, though her trial runs last long enough for her to

get to know her partners. She spends all of her slight accountant's income setting up housekeeping anew with the latest mate. The monotonous outcome: a few days of passion followed by weeks of disillusionment and a painful and sometimes expensive separation. But her faith remains unshakeable in the "next one." Altogether, the shortcomings seem seldom so much in her lovers as in her impractical idealization. I doubt if she has ever seen a lover as a human being.

But a few words on the *unsingle* homosexual. Countless homosexuals are heterosexually married, some being only partly gay, others for disguise.

There are also those who are *married* homosexually and consider this the goal of homosexuality. Many of these set-ups are mere pseudo-heterosexuality, with a "husband" and a "wife," rather than the desirable partnership of sexual equals, which is not my concern in this article. If a young man considers himself a girl, there's no harm in his trying to be a good wife to some big bruiser—but it isn't real homosexuality.

There are three main categories of single homosexuals: those who are single by choice and consider it an advantage; those who are single because their love instincts are dried up; and those who are still hunting. Some of the latter find their mate, and that's good, but I think socially-useful homosexuals are mostly in the first group: the men or women committed to something higher than their own physical desires, using homosexuality as fuel rather than as an end in itself. If they live with another person, it is likely for friendship or convenience, not mateship. One needn't reject his impulses by denying himself sex, love or affinity, but he always tries to check those impulses, never letting them dominate him or defer his ambition.

Ken Miles is a difficult but common type. Raised in a rough, bordertown background, straining to conform to super-masculine standards, he tortured himself with the unfaced sex problem till he was almost unable to face any problem. Yet he doggedly lifted himself by his bootstraps, searching his soul, analyzing and correcting his mannerisms and habits, trying, almost successfully, to press himself into the "average man" mold. Personable, but too self-occupied to "mix" well, he has submitted to his homosexual urges, with an analyst's promptings—but only as a stopgap. He is sure his homosexuality merely dams the flow of his natural heterosexual impulse. By freeing this urge now, he hopes to ultimately free the other. He has written a lengthy autobiographical sketch which I hope can soon see publication. He lives in a small room, frequently drops in on gay friends nearby, and spends hours wishing his father had saved him from this frustration by being more chummy, and trying to figure a scheme whereby boys who face this lonely problem could get a sympathetic ear in time . . .

Certainly one of the roughest aspects of the single homosexual is the case of the youths who don't know the answers and are afraid to ask the questions. But any older man who tries to lend a hand is liable to the charge of "corrupting" them . . .

I don't know if Manvers Parmain is single by choice. There's a lot that's not easily known about him, though the outer details are known to half of Chicago. A fantastic person, he wears the word, "character," like a title of nobility. He lives in the grand manner on a modest income in a quaint house that is like an amazingly overstuffed Victorian museum. He rises late and

begins to receive with sparkling conversation the friends and acquaintances who troupe in and out of his house till the following daybreak. The "grand style" is implicit in his every gesture, yet it is elegance without pretense. He is single, but he is seldom alone . . .

Manvers seems a mature and unusually colorful version of something seen in certain young, unabashed "queens," that gayety from which this life takes its most common but least accurate name. With many, the gayety is too forced—a sham—but these are some, and they are often constitutionally single, for whom the life is a "camp," a very good, gay time. So unlike the pathetic ones who so predictably commit suicide in gay novels, and sometimes in real life . . .

The tragic types I haven't dwelt on. But the sorriest seem to me those for whom the hunt is deadly serious, but who've passed their prime as hunters without finding even themselves.

Tilly Andrews would fit none of these categories. I knew her back east in 1948—she was sixty and one of those amazing persons who has done everything, known everyone, been everywhere. She became a doctor in in her youth, when that was a rare thing for a woman, was an active suffragette, and once member of a state Senate. She was in Frisco during the quake. She served overseas in the First War, lived in Hawaii. China and various parts of Europe and worked at all sorts of things. She published several novels, books, poems and articles over the years, all received with interest, but building up to no solid reputation. She was the best distance hiker I ever set out with.

I was taking private writing instructions from her—she took on a few students singly. I mentioned homosexuality in a story (she'd already spotted it in me) and we discussed it at length. I asked her why she'd never found a permanent mate.

"A *mate* for me?" and she roared. "Could you imagine there being two like me? I'm a single old shoe and heaven and earth couldn't find a mate for me.

"A real mate is someone who matches you pretty close, and if I found someone like myself the two of us couldn't stay in the same room twenty minutes. No, I'm not really joking. Mateship means equality, really meshing with another person —maybe the odds were better when I was young, but I was a pretty rare bird even then. Love is something else, and I've loved more times than I could count. People think you can't really love but once in a lifetime, or at least, only one person at a time. Nonsense! The dimensions of love are limited only by the individuals' capacities. I loved two of my husbands —and I still love my son and his family. I loved the first teacher who ever kindled an intelectual spark in me, and the first girl I ever slept with. I used to find a good husband for each of my lovers, after a year or so, which was *noble* of me. You see, I could love a simple person, but not live with them long. Yet all those loves are warmly present with me, as memories. And I have current loves: my students, this town, and this whole foolish and wonderful country of ours—loves aplenty, but never a mate in my whole life, and I don't feel I've missed it.

"I don't think everyone's capable of true mate ship. It requires a certain naivete. I've had too complex a life, too many sharp edges of fluid opinion about the things that count with us intellectuals, for me to blend prettily with another personality. Our society has the silly and damaging notion, taken from an 11th Century Romantic heresy, that there's something

wrong with anyone who doesn't find a lifetime soulmate, or a reasonably compatible compromise. And yet we profess to value individualism. There's nothing wrong with an individualist finding a mate, but the odds are against it. Mostly its just sham. Men seldom really want soulmates—they want housekeepers. I've never hankered to be a servant, or to have one."

"But don't you get lonesome now," I asked, "with no one to share your memories?"

"How could I? I've an oversized collection of memories, and I could only share them with someone who had a very similar lot herself, which is asking a lot, or with an analyst or some other paid ear. No, I'm capable of containing my own load, and if I must overflow a bit, there's writing—or some student willing to listen a few minutes.

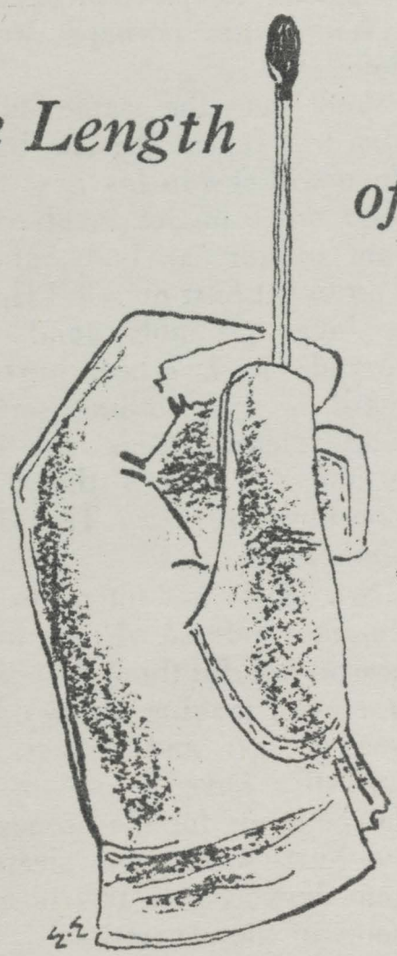
"No, real mateship wasn't for me. I've had a good life. I learned early to stand on my own feet, and that's something. Let those who can't manage that do the weeping and wailing. I've never been lonesome in my life."

This brings us back to our original question: What attitude should we take to the single homosexual's life? It depends on his own attitude toward life. If he is looking for a partner, then it *may* be good if he finds one, and can be very sad if he doesn't. But if he can find within himself, or in committment to some cause or profession, the resources to sustain him, then the life of that single homosexual can be a life worth living, a thing to shout about.

Like Tilly Andrews, I no longer look to find a suitable mate, and am satisfied to live alone—yet if one should come along—the right one . . .

Alden Kirby

The Length of a Match



Have you got a light
for a cigarette
in a corner of the dark
by the deeper protection
of some strange door
borrowed for the moment
— the length of a match —
until the torch of reassurance
is, in silence, passed on
to extinguish the night
before her darkness descends
like the fingers
of a young gloved hand?

Reflexions on Love and Marriage

For Rudy—*si quaeris, circumspice.*

by Didgeon

No one who has spent much time in or with the gay world can fail to have been struck by an obvious contradiction in the attitudes of many of the world's inhabitants.

On the one hand, we hear and observe everywhere the homosexual's preoccupation with his loneliness. Most homosexuals who have given any thought to their future are worried more by the prospect of old-age solitude than by any other problems. Homosexual fiction is full of references to it: serious studies of homosexual life cannot avoid considering it; and the "what's-to-become-of-me?" theme is frequent in conversation among us. Some try to answer the question by marrying, with results ranging from success to nervous breakdowns and worse. More, however, seek to close their eyes to the problem and to lead a life of completely artificial gaity "while it lasts" —with bitterness, alcohol, and/or suicide as frequent ends.

The frustration which so many of us so often feel is an outgrowth—or an early anticipation—of this solitude complex. Whether it derive from the failure to achieve a desired sexual object, or whether it be on the contrary that variant of *post coitum triste* which has been well named the "What-am-I-doing-here?" syndrome, the sense of solitude is at the same time cause and effect. And the success of gay bars derives largely from the fact that they offer us a place where we can find ourselves in at least the temporary company of our peers: for a few hours, perhaps, we are not alone.

And yet—the same homosexual who will repeat that he hates to be alone will say in his next breath, "I don't want to get involved. I don't want to hurt anybody, and I don't want to get hurt myself." He has been in love, probably, and it hasn't worked out: he's been hurt. Now his guard is up. Nothing serious. Just good friends. Let's not get sentimental. Let's keep things just the way they are . . . The clichés are numberless.

Now, I do not intend to go into a romantic defense of true love as the most wonderful thing that can happen to a man, making the sky bluer, the grass greener, and the rest. While the romantics have a case, a case can also be made for the proposition that love hurts worse than ulcers. (To do them justice, this too is a favorite theme of the romantics.)

My proposition is simpler, and is based upon simple pragmatism: *love makes sense*. The possibility of intellectual, emotional and physical harmony between two individuals (of whatever sex) is undeniable. This, in the last analysis, is what love is based upon. The *intensity* of love depends upon the degree of harmony; love's *depth* is a function of time, and grows with the awareness of harmony. It will be seen that this formula in no way implies exclusiveness of object (which we misname fidelity: true fidelity depends upon attitudes, not upon actions), nor — what is more important —does it involve identity of views. It is perfectly possible for one person to be in harmony with two or more others at once; it is *not* possible to have a complete identity of views with any other person, ever. The failure of most loves, heterosexual or homosexual, is the failure of one or both lovers to recognize these facts. There are sides to every individual's life that no other can completely share; this stems automatically from the truism that no two individuals are alike.

I suggest that the fear so many of us have of "getting involved," this unreasoning flight from any long-term intimate relationship, results from a fundamental misunderstanding of the true nature of love. More: I suggest that those who are "afraid of getting hurt" are those who would be most likely to make a success of marriage,* a long-term relationship equivalent to the parallel heterosexual link.

As in heterosexual marriage, homosexual marriage requires sexual compatibility. It requires the existence of mutual taste and mutual respect. And it requires above all an awareness of each partner's responsibility to the other.

This is not a pipe-dream: it happens every day. All of us know couples who have been together, happily, for years. Certainly it is not always easy: the instinct toward paternity seems to be very strong among many of us, and this must by the force of things be doomed to frustration; often it is difficult for us to rationalize away our jealousies; many of us are too egotistical—or too spoiled—to make allowances for another's peculiarities, while remaining too tolerant of our own; let's face it—many of us lack the emotional stability which we would require in order to make a success of marriage or of anything else.

I believe, however, that the fear of loneliness can by itself furnish us with a powerful incentive to re-examine the entire marriage question. "I'd give anything not to be alone!" Good! Then, with only a little understanding and generosity, marriage becomes not only a possibility but a good bet.

But not such irresponsible marriage as is so often contracted nowadays among heterosexuals—marriage as it was conceived of formerly—not indissoluble, surely, but to be dissolved only in very exceptional cases, and therefore not to be entered into without due reflexion. Just as a man decided whether a given woman had the qualities he wanted in a wife (is she beautiful, rich, intelligent, a good housekeeper?), and just as a woman knew what she wanted in a man (is he handsome, gallant, ambitious, a good provider?), so we should fix our standards according to what we want in our mate: a certain similarity in tastes or a sense of

*By marriage I do not mean the sacrilegious and obscene simulacrum indulged in by some of the wilder of our queens with the complicity of men who are a disgrace to their cloth. I mean the coming together, in all solemnity and reverence (religious or not) of two indivduals who desire to spend the rest of their lives together.

responsibility may well outweigh considerations of physical appearance or of age; snobbish as it may sound, each partner might do well to take into consideration the social standing of the other; and of course sexual compatibilty must be one element in any decision, although it be one element only.

This is not to say that romance should be absent from the homosexual marriage any more than from the heterosexual one. Quite to the contrary. But no sound and enduring marriage, of any kind, can be built upon passion alone.

Nor should it be entered into blindly nor drifted into. Any act of our lives which is likely to have long-term consequences is worthy of careful thought and preparation. Intelligent discussion of many purely material questions (the budget, common property, who is to wash the dishes) is vital at the outset if squabbles—or worse—are to be avoided later. None of these problems is incapable of solution—few problems of any kind are. It is, however, essential that they be met with eyes wide open, and far enough in advance.

In the same way, major problems should be worked out. It is inevitable that there be some differences in tastes between any two partners, if it be the gap between Beethoven and Brubeck or between Steve Allen and Ed Sullivan. Some compromises are easy to reach (two TV sets, perhaps?); others are more difficult; but most are possible.

The question of sexual "fidelity" may often be a harder nut to crack. Here it is difficult to give any advice, except to urge tolerance and a strict observance of *John*, VIII, 7: "Let him who is without sin . . ." To my mind, insistence upon sexual exclusivity is an archaic prejudice built upon old family inheritance customs and laws. To someone else, it may be a *sine qua non*. But here, again, the question should be considered in theory before it arises in practice.

If we look facts in the face, we can see the good as well as the bad. We need have no fear of "getting involved," provided that we are careful to get involved with someone who is for us the right kind of person.

And—what is most important—we need not be alone!

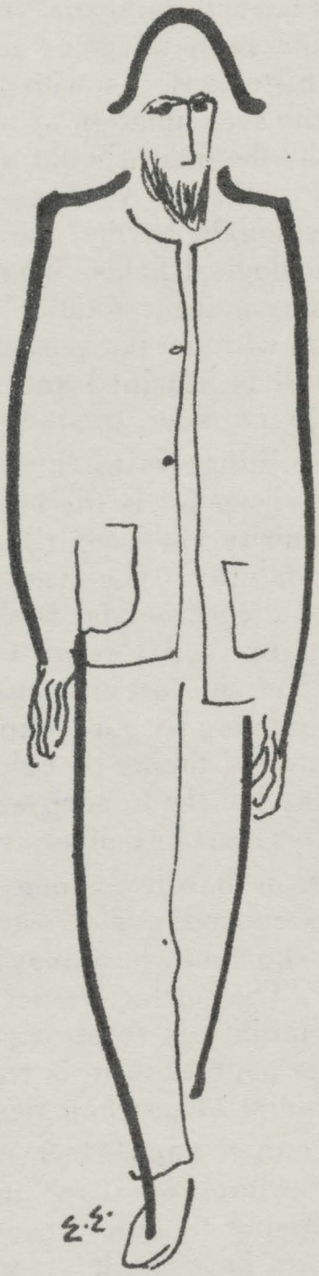
SHORT POINT FOR FUTURE FEET

Saucerian magnates know
this:
When all cognates & translations
have been wed, only the Greeks
May
have loved too early.

Marvin Bell

by wilfran nicols

THE OLDER HOMOSEXUAL



Fear of a possible lonely old age has tortured many a young person who has discovered his emotional desires to be toward those of his or her own sex.

Much self-imposed unhappiness among today's youth—whatever the sexual inclination—stems from following the crowd's opinion, going along with current fads of idol-worship, bizarre haircuts or clothes and so on, or pseudo-philosophical opinions garnered from the digest magazines. Movies and television have given them vicarious experiences or situations which many have found impossible to duplicate in actual life. With such an unpractical basis, it is no wonder many express fear of the future, fears which could lead into alcoholism, even into suicide.

While it may be normal for the early adolescent to find intense excitement in frequent sexual play, the headiness of alcohol, the apparent camaraderie of the public bar and spectator sports—while youth must navigate its initiation period into maturity, it is certainly unwise in early adulthood to permit juvenile interests to remain dominant. Maturity demands responsibility and the homosexual especially should not shirk it.

In the older person of forty, fifty and beyond, the continuation of adolescent interests becomes ridiculous and pathetic, particularly if they comprise the entire personality; thus, the "auntie" is born.

In the youthful gay world, the older homosexual is thought an "Auntie" in his dotage of forty, fifty, or beyond. Yet this psychic myopia is the very thing which will keep the youth in psychological chains and, in turn, make him an "auntie"!

The ancient Greek man-and-boy relationships of mentor and pupil extended beyond the sexual realm it has generally been relegated to by salacious historians. As with all knowledge, the accumulation of wisdom enjoyed by the older should not only be shared with the younger, but also eagerly sought beyond the scholastic and theological fields. What may appear to be an insurmountable personal problem with the inexperienced could very well be clarified and dissipated easily by an older, trusted person.

The willingness to investigate another's viewpoint is the beginning of that maturity which contributes to personal stability. The vast majority stumble along from day to day sure of nothing but today's—or tonight's—needs! Yet, this last group can achieve some direction by cultivating a dominant interest, taking thought not only for today but the tomorrows to come. The effort must be deliberate.

There is hardly anyone who does not win and keep a few trusted friends. one of whom may be or may have been a lover. The instinctive need of man for sociability is so strong that it is only the neurotic who is truly lonely to the point of psychological torture.

What, then, happens when time and years inevitably encroach upon us? Is it surprising that the answer lies in what we have built upon in our younger years? Added years will not affect a drastic change, unless the material is already dormant. It would be incredible for the homosexual whose life was just one gay bar after another to settle down in a monastic life, or for those who require gossipy (and envious!) chit-chat to retire to meditation or abstract study—it would be amazing to change these habits or attributes overnight. True, advancing years and physical weakness might force withdrawal from the hectic range enjoyed when younger, but the interests would remain the same.

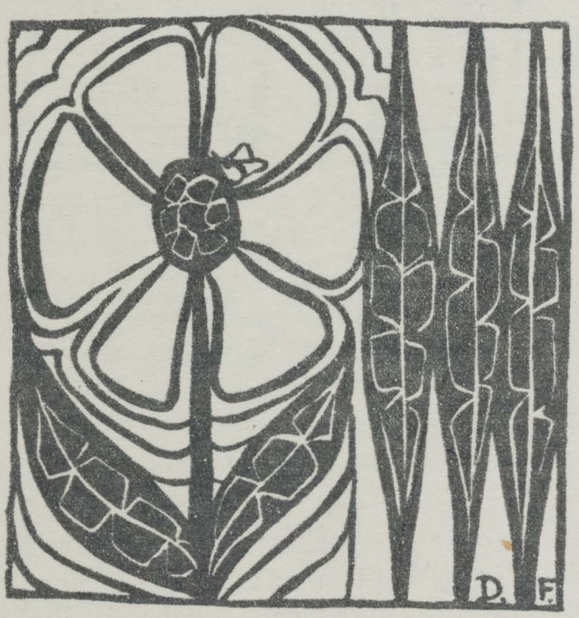
How does age affect the older homosexual, male or female? Here are some cases I know. Their history has enough alteration of fact to avoid identification but not to distort the meaning of their way of life.

"Tim" is a man of respected authority, a school official reaching the close of a long and honorable career in a discriminating educational system. Nearly seventy, with the acuity of the collegiate, he is physically attractive and sexually potent, with the youthfulness of mind and body characteristic of many homosexuals. Tim has had many lovers in his life, most of them from without his intellectual sphere, although now his friendships are cautious and selective as he has found companions on his own level. Many of the men he has known through sexual contact have become good friends after their emotions toward each other changed, and most admit an enrichment of mind through his acquaintance. He admits of physical change but states that nothing has altered psychologically over the years, so he would not comment in detail upon any questions. His whole philosophy is in two words, "Just live."

"Arthur" is of a wholly different world. An ordinary man, he has a child's blue-eyed frankness and a heart for all humanity. He left school

in early teens to help support his orphaned brothers and sisters. Art reads nothing to "stir head storms" (his phrase for strange ideas), knew he "loved men more than anything" by the time he was twenty, and was mercifully delivered from an early, family-forced marriage by divorce. He had a routine job for twenty years and saved carefully to buy a country house which he operates as a tourist home. This business demanded some help so there were no questions when younger men lived with him for months.

Eventually, an older man shared his love and together they helped more than one bright youngster through school. Arthur has a monogamous streak which satisfies him, as in a perfect marriage. Now in his seventies, he regrets nothing except the minor irritation of why he didn't invest more in a particular rose-bush which did not survive in the sandy soil on his property.



Friends he has made over the years, some meeting him as guests or lovers, are enough to make life full and stimulating. Always devoutly religious, he could never feel his homosexuality as a "sin" (his first lover was a member of a celibate clerical order). He does regret not having children by some "understanding woman," although this unfilled wish is based upon his shrewd observation of the amorality of children. "Children," he is fond of saying, "never question your morals!" I might add that neither do civilized and intelligent people where adults are concerned.

No one can think of "Dottie" and "Lottie" as separate personalities, for they share many avocations and much property. They have been Lesbians since high school, journeying the same professional road in the publishing field and also active in social reform. They have traveled widely and had summer vacations together in their shore cottage. Only a few isolated quarrels have disrupted their quiet life. A beautiful gentlemen's agreement works wonders when one of them will find a short visit to a relative necessary whenever antagonisms arrive.

While age has taken the usual toll, and sexual contact may be a thing of the past, their emotional attachment to each other is beautiful to see. One, the tinier, has been the Hetty Green of their relationship and this has accounted for their financial comfort nearing eighty, and also the anticipatory interest of their more conventional relatives! They have no regrets and certainly no pangs of conscience nor fear of the supernatural, as their personal philosophy is contained in a quotation by Theodore Parker, "Man is greater than the churches which tyrannize over him."

One of the most fascinating men I've known can very well follow the conceived notion of the homosexual "Auntie," but this act does not fool close friends. "Sparky," a life-long nickname descriptive of his champagne personality which made each moment an incandescent bubble, is still a "bachelor" playboy at seventy-five. His home is the gathering place for all ages and the center for social

affairs attended by men and women of all sexual bents, a coterie whose common bond is their willingness to permit others to live their lives as they see fit.

The eternal lover and gracious host, his past birthday showered him with dozens of expensive gifts from old friends. Many sent cards, each revealing the ability of one personality to impress many kinds of people, so that their joint memories should become treasured gifts.

"Don't depend entirely on sex" is his advice, "give something of the beauty of living, of friendship, of whatever common culture you have, or teaching and learning."

A small store owner, Sparky has had little ambition beyond enjoying life, although along with this has come a hard-earned appreciation of the creators of art and culture, the writers, musicians, painters and sculptors. His main comment before anything acomplished by some one else—no matter if that achievement is a delicious pie or an original work of art—is the deeply-felt word of wonderment and sincerity, "Gosh!" Life is still a matter of exciting discovery.

"The Boss" is Sparky's longest lover and is nearly a dozen years his senior, now in his mid-eighties and a neighbor. Although physical potency has diminished, it is not wholly gone and there are times when its desire must and is met by physical contact with another, even if only in a passive way. To the questions so often put to the older man, "How long do you expect to keep going?" He laughs and states with an affirmative jab of the fingers, "When there's a will, there must be a way!"

A healthy mind is generally found in a healthy body, active even in senescence. One immediately thinks of Bernard Shaw, Mary Baker Eddy, Pius XII and other individuals besides Grandma Moses who have maintained extraordinary intellectual vigor into what is considered old age. Truly, these later years can be also the "Golden Years." From the point of sexual enjoyment, I am reminded of the flower grower in a colder climate, when he stated, "Our flowers may not blossom so often as some in another zone, but we treasure them when they do!"

Talents, hobbies or interests have no age limits to the active mind and nimble fingers, and only physical weakness draws the reins. Age or retirement from work brings time and energy to cultivate and enjoy neglected interests.

The lonely youth will also be the lonely older person, while those with the ability to easily acquire new friends will not find that ability dulled even though death or removal changes friends or lovers. How could it be otherwise?

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